

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with E. Hernandez on February 26, 2010.

This application has been amended as follows:

BEGIN EXAMINER AMENDMENT APPROVED BY APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE. The following consists of the full text of the allowed claims.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): An apparatus configured to perform a decontamination operation inside a jet pump of a nuclear reactor in which the jet pump includes an opening with a tapered surface, the apparatus comprising:

an apparatus body having an elongated tubular member sized to be fully inserted down into the jet pump of the nuclear reactor, the tubular member having an upper portion that defines a top end of the apparatus body and is attached to a wire for support;

the elongated tubular member having a circumferential wall with a plurality of holes, the plurality of holes being connected to a hose, the hose being connected to an open upper end of the elongated tubular member, the hose and the plurality of holes configured to guide core water from the jet pump to an analytical filter located outside the nuclear reactor;

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a weight for imparting gravitational force on the apparatus body, the weight having an upper portion that is coupled to a lower portion of the tubular member via a bellows;

a guide rod abuttedly connected to a lower portion of the weight, the lower portion of the weight defining a bottom end of the apparatus body, the guide rod being elastically biased toward a predetermined, non-zero angle relative to a vertical axis of the apparatus body;

wherein the biased, predetermined non-zero angle of the guide rod facilitates entry of the guide rod into the tapered surface of the jet pump opening and wherein, after the guide rod is inserted into the jet pump opening, the apparatus is lowered via the wire so that the apparatus body is essentially fully inserted into the jet pump to perform the decontamination operation.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the bellows comprises an elastic member coupling the lower portion of the tubular member to the upper portion of the weight.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the bellows is configured to impart a biasing force to restore the guide rod to the predetermined, non-zero angle relative to a vertical axis of the apparatus body.

Claim 35 (New): An apparatus configured to perform an inspection operation inside a jet pump of a nuclear reactor in which the jet pump includes an opening with a tapered surface, the apparatus comprising:

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an apparatus body having an elongated tubular member sized to be essentially fully inserted down into the jet pump of the nuclear reactor, the tubular member having an upper portion that defines a top end of the apparatus body and is attached to a wire for support;

the elongated tubular member having a circumferential wall with a plurality of holes;

a plurality of signal cables connected to the elongated tubular member for connecting inspection means fixed to the plurality of holes to a controller exterior to the nuclear reactor;

a weight for imparting gravitational force on the apparatus body, the weight having an upper portion that is coupled to a lower portion of the tubular member via a bellows;

a guide rod abuttedly connected to a lower portion of the weight, the lower portion of the weight defining a bottom end of the apparatus body, the guide rod being elastically biased toward a predetermined, non-zero angle relative to a vertical axis of the apparatus body;

wherein the biased, predetermined non-zero angle of the guide rod facilitates entry of the guide rod into the tapered surface of the jet pump opening and wherein, after the guide rod is inserted into the jet pump opening, the apparatus body is lowered via the wire so that the apparatus body is essentially fully inserted into the jet pump to perform the inspection operation.

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Claim 36 (New): The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the bellows comprises an elastic member coupling the lower portion of the tubular member to the upper portion of the weight.

Claim 37 (New): The apparatus of claim 35, wherein the bellows is configured to impart a biasing force to restore the guide rod to the predetermined, non-zero angle relative to a vertical axis of the apparatus body.

Claims 15-20 and 24-29 have been cancelled.

Drawings:

The following change to the drawings have been approved by the examiner and agreed upon by applicant:

A Replacement Sheet for Sheet 4 illustrating Figures 4a and 4b, correcting on obvious typographical error by bringing “4B” on the same line and immediately following “Fig.” underneath the Figure on the right hand side. In order to avoid abandonment of the application, applicant must make these above agreed upon drawing changes.

END OF EXAMINER’S AMENDMENT.

REASON FOR ALLOWANCE

2. ***Claims 11 and 33-37 are allowed.*** The following is an examiner’s statement of reasons for allowance: Houser et al (US 2003/0060685 A1) as cited in the prior office action only teaches a plurality of holes 835 ([0195]) in the extreme end of “foot” of the apparatus, the latter corresponding to the guide of applicants (see Figures 62-64), *not* in the elongated tubular member of the apparatus body 805/810/820. Only the “foot” is, in

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some embodiments, biased toward a non-zero, predetermined angle (Figures 65-68), relative to a vertical axis of the body, and hence only the component with the plurality of holes and not the elongated tubular member of the apparatus body could possibly be considered to meet the claimed "guide rod". Therefore, Houser et al do not anticipate the claimed inventions as defined by claims 11 and 35. Nor would it have been obvious to modify the claimed invention in view of any prior art of record to arrive at the inventions as claimed. No other prior art is found to anticipate or render obvious the claimed invention as defined by examiner-amended independent claims 11 or 35. Regarding art in nuclear reactor technology previously cited, closest is Levesque (US 6,076,407), but for reasons made of record by applicant in the response filed 2/10/09, pp. 9-12, to the office action mailed 9/17/08 and by examiner in the office action mailed 5/11/09 (section 9, sub-section d) Levesque does not anticipate any of the claims, nor is any claim obvious over the prior art of record.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. Examiner also encloses an updated Form PTO-1449 for each of the Information Disclosure Statements filed respectively on 11/13/06, 1/30/04, 3/1/06 and 9/11/06, where it is acknowledged that examiner has considered all IDS items listed thereon, with the proviso that JP 2001-141873 is known to have Kurata et al as inventors rather than what is mentioned on the respective Forms PTO-1449. See examiner's annotation.
4. Additionally enclosed is a Bibliographic Sheet, confirming a previously mailed Bib Sheet.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

/JOHANNES P MONDT/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3663

February 25, 2010.